

## Chapter 2. Profile of Sample

The Profile of the Sample in the Appendix presents a demographic profile of Michigan adults across the state and in eight regions. Understanding the demographic characteristics of Michigan adults helps us to understand better how regions differ in their attitudes toward transportation in Michigan. Throughout this report, we show how Michigan adults differ on key questions regionally (if there are regional differences important enough to show).

### 2.1 Personal Demographics

Michigan adults are split by gender, with 52% women and 48% men. Twenty-two percent (22%) are 18 to 29 years of age, and 16% are over 65 years of age.

One-half (49%) of Michigan adults have a high school education or less, and 32% have a college education. Eight percent have a post-graduate degree.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of the sample have household incomes under \$40,000, and 24% have household incomes over \$75,000.

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the state's adult population is White, while 19% is non-White.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of Michigan adults live in areas (defined by their zip code) where the population density is under 150 people per square mile. Twenty-eight percent (28%) live in an area where the population density is between 150 and 750 people per square mile. Another 24% live in areas where the population density is between 750 and 3000 people per square mile. Finally, 25% live in areas where the population density is 3000 or more people per square mile.

### 2.2 Driving Habits

Sixty-one percent (61%) of Michigan adults work outside the home, while 39% either do not work or work at home. Of those who work outside the home, 84% drive alone to work, eight percent carpool, and another eight percent get to work by some other means. The median length of time it takes for a commuter to get to work is 35 minutes. Twelve percent (12%) of all Michigan adults commute over one hour to work.

### 2.3 Regions

As noted earlier, we have divided the state into the seven MDOT regions to see if opinion toward transportation issues varies in the state. Regions are shown in **Figure 1**.

### **2.3.1 Metro**

This region consists of Detroit and most, but not all, of its suburbs. It also includes Port Huron, making it a region with three international crossings with Canada. It is the smallest region in terms of land mass, but makes up 42% of the entire Michigan adult population. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents in this region live in areas where the population density is 3000 or more people per square mile. Thirty percent (30%) live in areas where the population density is 5000 or more people per square mile. Only 17% live in areas where the population density is below 1000 people per square mile.

This region has the highest proportion of adult residents with household incomes over \$75,000 (28%). The adult residents of this region are also the least White (69%), with the highest proportion of African-Americans (19%) and Hispanics (seven percent).

Residents in this region are more likely not to work outside of their homes (42%), but also the most likely to commute over an hour to work (17%). Commuters are the least likely to drive alone to work (81%)—not because they are any more likely to carpool (seven percent) but, rather, because they are more likely to take public transit (eight percent).

### **2.3.2 University**

This region consists of the western exurbs of Detroit, the capital city of Lansing, and the smaller cities of Jackson and Ann Arbor. Michigan's two flagship universities are in this region. It is the second largest region in terms of the state's adult population (15%). While no region in Michigan can be said to be growing tremendously, this region has the most population growth, with about one percent growth per year in the past five years. Far fewer residents in the region live in areas with high population density, with only four percent living in zip codes with 3000 or more people per square mile. At the same time, compared to regions outside of the Metro region, there are relatively few residents in especially low population density areas (28% in areas with fewer than 150 people per square mile).

This region's population is the youngest, with 25% under 30 years of age and only 33% 50 years of age or older. The University Region, in living up to its name, is also the most educated, with 36% of the adults having completed college.

Residents in this region are among the most likely to work outside of their homes (66%), and this region has the second highest percentage of residents who commute over an hour to work (12%). Commuters in this region are the most likely to walk to work (seven percent) and eight percent carpool, but they are among the least likely to take public transit to work (two percent).

### **2.3.3 Southwest**

This region is considerably smaller in population (nine percent) and consists of nine counties in the Southwest corner of the state. Kalamazoo is the largest city in the region. Smaller cities include Battle Creek and Bentonville/St. Joseph. Only six percent of Southwest adults live in

high population density areas (3000 or more people per square mile), while a high proportion (38%) live in areas with low population density (fewer than 150 people per square mile).

Relatively few residents in this region have household incomes over \$75,000, and this region has the highest proportion of adults with no education beyond high school.

Residents in this region are among the most likely to work outside of their homes (66%), but the least likely (five percent) to drive more than an hour to work. The percentage of commuters driving alone in their car (91%) is the highest.

### **2.3.4 Bay**

Thirteen percent (13%) of Michigan's adult population live in these 13 counties surrounding Saginaw Bay. This region includes the cities of Flint, Saginaw, Midland, and Bay City. However, very few (four percent) residents in the Bay region live in high population density areas (3000 or more people per square mile), while 35% live in areas with low population density (fewer than 150 people per square mile).

This region is not different from the state as a whole in terms of age, income, and education. However, the region does have the second highest percentage of non-Whites (13%).

Residents in this region are among the least likely to work outside of their homes (46%), and nine percent of Bay adults drive more than an hour to work. Carpooling in this region is relatively high (nine percent of commuters), but no one we interviewed reported walking or biking to work.

### **2.3.5 Grand**

This region, which is home to 12% of Michigan's adult population, is also growing at roughly one percent a year. It includes Grand Rapids and the much smaller cities of Muskegon and Holland. Grand has the second highest percentage of residents (23%) living in high population density areas (3000 or more people per square mile), and the second lowest percentage of residents (23%) living in areas with the lowest population density (fewer than 150 people per square mile).

The Grand Region has the highest percentage of adults who have at least some college education (59%), and has the fewest adults (19%) with household incomes under \$30,000. This region is also quite young, with only 35% of residents over 50 years of age and 48% under 40 years of age. It also is among the most White (92%).

Sixty-three percent (63%) of the residents in the Grand Region work outside of their homes, and eight percent drive more than an hour to work. This region has the highest proportion of commuters who carpool (ten percent) and the second highest percentage of commuters who use public transit (five percent), but no one we interviewed in this region reported walking or biking to work.

### **2.3.6 North**

This region consists of roughly the northern third of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Despite its large land mass, only six percent of the state lives in this region. There are no urban areas in this region. Indeed there are no residents (zero percent) in the region who live in zip codes with 750 or more people per square mile. All regions south of the North Region have at least 22% of residents living in such moderate to high density zip codes. Eighty-four percent (84%) of North residents—more than in any other region—live in areas with fewer than 150 people per square mile.

The North Region has the lowest proportion of residents with household incomes over \$75,000 (five percent) and the most with household incomes under 30,000 (35%). The North is the oldest region, with one-half (51%) of adults 50 years of age or older and only 16% under 30 years of age.

The North Region has the fewest adults working outside their homes (57%), and only six percent of North adults drive more than an hour to work. Eighty-six percent (86%) of commuters in this region drive to work alone.

### **2.3.7 Superior**

This region, representing the entire Upper Peninsula, is largest in terms of land area but the smallest (three percent) in terms of population. This is also the only region whose population has dropped since 2000. There are no urban areas in this region and very few four-lane highways, but it does contain an international crossing with Canada. Like the North region, no one (zero percent) from this region lives in a zip code with moderate to high population density (750 or more people per square mile), and it has a very high proportion (72%) of people living in low population density areas (fewer than 150 people per square mile).

Fourteen percent (14%) of Superior adults have household incomes over \$75,000 and 32% have household incomes under 30,000. Forty-four percent (44%) of adults are 50 years of age or older, while only 36% are under 40 years of age. Superior adults are among the most White (92%) and the least likely (22%) to have completed a college education.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of the residents in the Superior Region work outside of their homes (66%), and eight percent drive more than an hour to work. Eighty-three percent (83%) of commuters in this region drive to work alone.